

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 01467 171714Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2695

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

SECDEF WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

JCS WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE

USDELMC

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

USDOCOSOUTH

DIRNSA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR PFOR GR US

SUBJ: GREEK PRESS COVERAGE OF TERMINATION OF ROUND THREE  
BASE TALKS

REF ATHENS 1440 (DTG 171322Z FEB 76) (NOTAL)

1. GREEK LANGUAGE PRESS SINCE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16,  
AFFORDED WIDE COVERAGE TO CONCLUSION OF ROUND THREE OF  
THE BILATERAL TALKS RELATIVE TO THE STATUS OF U.S. MILITARY  
FACILITIES IN GREECE. THE CENTRAL ITEM IN SUNDAY'S  
COVERAGE WAS THE TEXT OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE  
WHICH ANNOUNCED THAT WHILE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS HAD BEEN  
MADE, A FOURTH ROUND OF TALKS WOULD BE REQUIRED . (REFTEL).

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 01467 171714Z

A COMPANION ELEMENT PICKED UP BY SEVERAL JOURNALS

REFERRED TO A LONDON TIMES STORY OF THE PREVIOUS DAY REPORTING THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT WAS TO BE EXPECTED WITHIN A FEW WEEKS. PREDICTABLY, THE COMMUNIST PRESS TOOK A NEGATIVE POSITION TOWARDS THE TALKS SUGGESTING INTER ALIA THAT A SNAG HAD OCCURRED IN THE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS REFLECTING THE "TOUGH STANCE" TAKEN BY THE U.S. IN ITS RESOLVE TO HOLD ON TO ITS BASES.

2. MONDAY AFTERNOON AND TUESDAY MORNING NEWSPAPERS SHIFTED THEIR FOCUS TO AN ADDITIONAL GOG STATEMENT ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 15 WHICH OFFERED A CLARIFICATION ON THE BASE TALKS WHICH WAS NECESSITATED BY "INACCURACIES" PUBLISHED IN CERTAIN NEWSPAPERS (SEE ATHENS 1440 FOR FULL TEXT OF THIS STATEMENT). FOR MOST PART, GENERAL COVERAGE WAS POSITIVE IN NATURE, ANTICIPATING THAT ULTIMATE PLACEMENT OF REMAINING U.S. FACILITIES UNDER GREEK CONTROL WOULD WORK TOWARD GREECE'S BEST INTERESTS. HERE AGAIN THE COMMUNIST PRESS PROVED THE EXCEPTION WITH SUCH THEMES SOUNDED AS (A) NECESSITY TO PUT THE BASES' QUESTION TO A PLEBISCITE AND (B) THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE GOG TO FULLY ENLIGHTEN THE GREEK PEOPLE ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE BASE QUESTIONS.

3. SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM A FEW STORIES FOLLOW. TO VIMA (LIBERAL, OPPOSITION) ON FEBRUARY 16 STRESSED IN ITS FIRST PAGE STORY THAT A FOCUS OF SPECIAL ATTENTION IN THE FOURTH ROUND WILL BE ELECTRONIC MONITORING INSTALLATIONS WHICH REQUIRE SPECIALLY TRAINED TECHNICIANS. IT ARGUES THAT THE GREEK COMMANDERS OF SUCH BASES WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FULLY EXPLOIT THE INFORMATION FROM SUCH INSTALLATIONS FOR GREEK NATIONAL DEFENSE PURPOSES IF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE RESTRICTED TO THE CARRYING OUT OF CERTAIN "FORMAL" DUTIES ONLY. IN AN ACCOMPANYING EDITORIAL TO VIMA CALLS FOR THE FULL NATIONALIZATION OF THE BASES AND THEIR FULL SUBMISSION NOT ONLY TO GREEK CONTROL BUT ALSO TO THE SERVICE OF GREEK INTERESTS. ADDITIONALLY, IT CALLS FOR THE ABOLITION OF ALL SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR ANY REMAINING U.S. TECHNICAL PERSONNEL AND NOT MERELY THE RESTRICTION OF SUCH PRIVILEGES. FINALLY, IT RUGES THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 01467 171714Z

SPEEDIEST POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTION OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL WITH GREEK PERSONNEL. ELEFTHERTOTYPIA (LEFT-OF-CENTER, ANTI-U.S.) FOR ITS PART TOOK A DIFFERENT TACK HINGING ITS REPORTS ON ALLEGED STATEMENTS OF MINISTER AVEROFF TO DELEGATES OF A PAN-CRETAN COMMITTEE WHICH VISITED HIM RECENTLY. THE STORY ASSERTED THAT AVEROFF WAS "IN FAVOR" OF U.S. BASES, IN PARTICULAR CLAIMING THAT SOME WERE "NECESSARY" IN CRETE. THIS PAPER ALSO ALLEGED THAT AVEROFF HAD DECLARED THAT THE

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CYPRUS TRAGEDY LAY WITH GREEKS,  
AND "NOT WITH AMERICANS OR NATO." COMMENT: LATER  
THAT EVENING AVEROFF ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:  
"AS A MEMBER OF A GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, I  
THOUGHT IT NECESSARY TO ACCEPT A REQUEST FOR AN AUDIENCE  
SUBMITTED BY A COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF 18 CRETANS IN  
CONNECTION WITH THE BASES. INSTEAD, I FOUND MYSELF BEFORE  
A GROUP COMPOSED OF FIVE MEMBERS, WHICH IMMEDIATELY  
APPEARED TO REPRESENT AN EXTREMIST GROUP OF THE COMMITTEE.  
I AM NOT SURPRISED THAT THE CONTENTS OF OUR DISCUSSION  
REACHED A SECTION OF THE PRESS SLIGHTLY--BUT MOST  
SUITABLY--ALTERED."

4. THE LATEST COVERAGE FROM THE COMMUNIST PRESS (FEB 17)  
ON THE BASES FOLLOWED A PREDICTABLE LINE AND LIKELY WILL BE  
REPEATED IN THE FUTURE. RIZOSPASTIS (KKE-EXTERIOR) ASSERTED  
THIS MORNING THAT "THE AMERICAN BASES REMAIN: CRETE IS THE  
EYE OF THE CIA AND THE PENTAGON: THE OPINION GAINS GROUND  
THAT THE MATTER SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE PEOPLE THROUGH A  
PLEBISCITE." AVGHI (KKE-INTERIOR) FOR ITS PART ARGUES IN AN  
INSIDE PAGE EDITORIAL THAT THE GOVERNMENT MUST ENLIGHTEN  
THE PEOPLE ON THE PATH WHICH IT HAS TAKEN IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS  
WITH THE U.S. AND THAT THIS SHOULD BE PERFORMED IN THE  
PARLIAMENT. AVGHI HAD LED OFF ITS STORY BY ASSERTING THAT  
THE THIRD ROUND TALKS HAD ENDED IN SUBSTANTIAL FAILURE  
AS REGARDS THE ABOLISHING OF THE AMERICAN BASES IN GREECE.

5. APART FROM THE COMMUNIST PRESS--AND TO SOME DEGREE  
ELEFTHEROTYPIA--THE REMAINDER OF THE PRESS, WHILE CAUTIOUS,  
QUESTIONING AND CRITICAL, NEVERTHELESS, FOR THE MOST PART,  
FORSEES AN ULTIMATELY SATISFACTORY OUTCOME WHICH WILL SEE  
U.S. FACILITIES UNDER GREEK CONTROL SERVING GREEK DEFENSE  
INTERESTS. KUBISCH  
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## Message Attributes

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